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1. Lavrentiya Bay (St. Lawrence Bay) is supposed to be the administrative capital of the Chukotsk Peninsula. It is on the Bering Sea, between Uelen and Chaplina. Approximate coordinates: 65°32'N, 170°50'W. HO Chart 5819 It is Peninsula headquarters for the District Executive Committee. The Committee's headquarters are on a so-called culture base which has a court house. This court house is the seat of justice for the whole Peninsula. The settlement has no docking facilities. Cargo is put ashore by lighters. (At least that was the situation in 1945.)

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2. The settlement consists of a Chukchi village (Yandagai), a North Sea Route station (including a weather station, a hydrographic station, and a radio station), and a culture base of the District Executive Committee. This culture base is really the District Executive Committee's headquarters for the Peninsula. Its mission is to inculcate the population of the Chukotsk region with the Soviet doctrine. The DEC people at the culture base also direct the teachers and schools of the entire Peninsula. Thus, Lavrentiya might be regarded as the political headquarters of Chukotsk. In practice, however, such was not the case up to 1945.

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3. The Chukchi village (Yandagai) is on Cape Krigugon, the southwestern entrance point of Lavrentiya Bay, which goes 20 miles inland, in a northwesterly direction. Then, northwest of the village, are the North Sea Route station and the culture base.

The village is generally haphazard in layout (like all Chukchi villages), but it does have a semblance of a boardwalk main street, and there may be a few cross thoroughfares. Chukchi huts are the same construction as at Uelen and elsewhere on the Peninsula (wooden frames covered with canvas or with seal and walrus fur). The buildings at the polar base (North Sea Route) and the culture base are the usual standard log structures. The settlement has a physical culture field (or playground?), with parallel bars, climbing ladders, rings, etc.

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4. Lavrentiya's Chukchi population might have been in 1945 about 200, the same as Vankaren's. There were some 400 white people in Lavrentiya in 1945 -- employees of the North Sea Route station and the culture base, party committee personnel / District Executive Committee personnel, school teachers, warehouse employees, the cooperative store's employees, courthouse people, and military personnel. the natives are decreasing in number.

the DEC selected Lavrentiya as the site for the Peninsula's culture headquarters because there were many Chukchi on the bay's shore and nearby interior. But the natives either died off or moved elsewhere. In 1945, there were only a comparative handful. The Soviets were keenly disappointed, and allowed the culture base to dwindle until it became small and unimportant.

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there are only a few thousand Chukchis left on the entire Chukotsk Peninsula. They used to be a friendly people. The Soviets, however, have broken their spirit -- especially of the "fishing Chukchi," -- and they all are now surly. (There are two kinds of Chukchi: the fishing Chukchi on the coast, and the reindeer Chukchi in the interior -- who are nomads. The reindeer Chukchi are far better off than the coastal tribes, who are very poor.) Chukchis are Mongoloid.

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5. there are no foreigners in Lavrentiya Bay. seen only one foreign ship in harbor. This was in 1935. The ship was a US craft of about 3,000 tons. it had some armament. It could have been a Coast Guard cutter.

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6. The most important personality in Lavrentiya was the secretary of the party committee (DEC). His duties were solely political -- to teach and spread the Soviet gospel. He had some five under-secretaries to do the administrative work of the culture base, and everything was under his supervision.

7. Administrative buildings are scattered throughout the settlement but most are at the polar station and the culture base. In 1945, they were all single-story structures, about 40 meters long by 12 meters wide. The Air Force has guards at the airfield, which is on the north side of the bay, across from the culture base. This airfield (airdrome) was under construction in 1945.

8. Lavrentiya is a good harbor if you know your way around. Most ships anchor three or four miles offshore, about off the polar station (between the village and the culture base). Water there is fairly deep. There are no docks, and cargo is put ashore by lighters. There are no barriers between this anchorage and the shore. Prior to 1935, foreign ships called fairly often; after 1935, very rarely, if at all.

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9. The airdrome is across the bay -- on the north shore. it is a natural field. there is a tundra road from Uelen to Lavrentiya, and it ends at the Lavrentiya airfield. The road will take trucks in the summer and tractor-drawn sled traffic in winter. In 1945, the airfield was not regarded as of much military importance.

10. The economy of Lavrentiya Bay is based on the administrative activity of the village, the polar station, and the culture base, and on hunting, fishing and trading by the natives. It is a very limited economy. The settlement gets its water from springs in the summer and from melted snow in winter. There is a small electric station that gives irregular service. Electric lights are scattered. Important administrative buildings have electric lights. The others use oil.

11. Lavrentiya Bay has the usual Soviet party-type newspaper. It is edited and printed by the District Executive Committee at the culture base. It appears only irregularly.

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12. Lavrentiya lacks private radio receiving facilities -- like all other settlements on the Chukotsk Peninsula. Living quarters of whites have loud speakers connected with the radio station for dissemination of the usual so-called party and culture programs put out by the Politburo people.
13. Lavrentiya Bay has a hospital of 20 to 30 beds located in the village.

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